

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the drawings, Abstract, Specification and claims 1, 5, 7-9, 15, 20, 25 and 28 are amended. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate that claims 1-4 and 6-19 are allowed.

Applicants also appreciate that claims 5 and 28-33 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, claims 5 and 28 have been amended to obviate the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Thus, claims 5 and 28-33 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants also appreciate that claims 24-27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 20 has been amended to include some of the allowable features of claim 25. Thus, claims 20-23 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Braun during the November 4, 2003 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

I. Formal Matters

In items 1-3, the Office Action objects to the Abstract under MPEP §608.01(b). By this Amendment, the originally filed Abstract has been replaced by the current Abstract, which takes into considerations the Examiner's objections. Thus, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

In item 5, the Office Action objects to the Specification under 37 C.F.R. §1.74. Accordingly, Applicants have amended the Specification on page 11 and 12, and Fig. 30 to obviate the objection. Thus, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

In item 6, the Office Action objects to claims 7 and 8 as containing minor informalities. The Amendment is in response to the objection. Thus, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

In item 7, the Office Action objects to claims 5 and 28-33 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

By this Amendment, claim 5 has been amended to provide proper antecedent basis, and claim 28 has been amended to remove the double recitation. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Japanese Publication by Kamioka et al., JP-406149019a in view of Swift, U.S. Patent No. 4,741,942 has been rendered moot because of the incorporation of some of the allowable subject matter of claim 25 into base claim 20. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-33 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:DJC/brc

Attachment:
Abstract
Fig. 30(a) and 30(b)

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